

## 50,000 wild birds smuggled through Solomons: group

July 18 2012

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More than 54,000 wild birds, including critically endangered species, were laundered through the Solomon islands into the global wildlife trade between 2000 and 2010, a wildlife group said Tuesday.

The birds, classified as "captive-bred" to skirt wildlife trafficking laws and in the main not native to the islands, were exported mostly to Singapore and Malaysia from where they were sold to other parts of the world, TRAFFIC said in a report.

"Between 2000 and 2010, more than 54,000 birds, mainly parrots and cockatoos, were imported from the Solomon Islands and declared as

captive-bred," said the report, launched in Singapore.

"Yet [local authorities](#) confirmed to TRAFFIC that the Solomon Islands is not known to have substantial bird breeding facilities," it added.

TRAFFIC said Singapore and Malaysia accounted for 93 percent of all birds imported from Solomon Islands between 2000 and 2010.

Malaysia however has suspended its bird imports and TRAFFIC is urging Singapore to do the same.

"Singapore should follow Malaysia's lead in suspending bird imports, not only from the Solomon Islands but anywhere else if there is a lack of clarity as to their legal origin," said TRAFFIC's Southeast Asia deputy director Chris Shepherd.

The birds included vulnerable, endangered and critically endangered species such as the Yellow-crested Cockatoo, which cannot be traded under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna, or CITES.

In addition, a majority of the birds were not native to the Solomon Islands but are found in Indonesia or [Papua New Guinea](#).

The absence of records showing the [Solomon Islands](#) had imported the birds indicated that they had been caught in the wild, TRAFFIC said.

Shepherd said the smugglers were deceiving authorities to gain access to the global [pet trade](#).

"Declaring exported birds as being captive-bred has all the hallmarks of a scam to get around international trade regulations," he said in the report.

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Citation: 50,000 wild birds smuggled through Solomons: group (2012, July 18) retrieved 21 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-07-wild-birds-smuggled-solomons-group.html>

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